

I thank EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas for her conviction and determination and for applying her experience as a psychiatric nurse to champion the cause that someone in crisis should be able to get treatment in a hospital and not just be locked up in a jail cell.

I thank Speaker RYAN, who, in his very first days as Speaker of the House, pledged his support and determination to ensure that we would take action in the way that we treat the mentally ill in this Nation.

To all of my colleagues in the House who spoke up, stepped up, and teamed up in our efforts to end the mental health crisis in America, thank you.

I thank our colleagues in the Senate as well—Senator CHRIS MURPHY, Dr. BILL CASSIDY, and Senators CORNYN and ALEXANDER—for their leadership in bringing this bill to a vote before the Senate. As the Senate takes up the bill today, I ask them all to cast their votes while being mindful of the millions of American lives it will save.

Most importantly, I close by thanking the millions who had the courage to come forward and share their stories of pain and suffering under this broken system—those who have lost a loved one, those who have a loved one who is sitting in a jail cell or who is homeless in the streets.

To those who have been the last, the least, the lost, and the lonely, know that we will continue to listen. In the final version of the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, we did not get everything we needed, but we needed everything we got, and we will continue to work together.

When we began this journey 4 years ago, I challenged us all to realize the sad reality of, where there is no help, there is no hope. Know now that, as we pass and enact this bill, we will finally be able to say there is help and, most assuredly, there is hope.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 43 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Throughout history, You have been ever present to all believers. In times of darkness, we readily turn on lights.

Millions of Americans in this season have variously turned to the celebration of the Christmas season, with its trees and lights, and Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights.

Even so, in our political world, there remains the reality of considerable disagreement and contention. Where there is darkness here, send forth a spark of inspiration and grace to enlighten minds and warm hearts to respond to Your love for Your people.

Eternal Father of us all, fill Your children with the delight that comes from light. May we walk no longer in the darkness of distrust, but join together in mutual understanding and peace toward the common well-being of our Nation.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. KUSTER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

#### NICARAGUA

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, days leading up to the November 30 and December 1 protest in Nicaragua against the Ortega regime's proposed interoceanic canal and a corrupt election, the National Police, instructed by Daniel Ortega, sent heavy machinery, created checkpoints, and used barricades to block farmers and indigenous communities from attending the protests. Nicaraguans were severely beaten. Some were even shot. But Ortega's repression did not stop the Nicaraguan people who yearn for freedom and prosperity from participating in the protest.

Mr. Speaker, in September of this year, this legislative body passed the NICA Act—legislation I authored, along with my colleague, ALBIO SIRE,

from New Jersey, which calls for free elections, respect for the rule of law, and freedom of expression. The Ortega regime seems eager to neglect these basic important conditions and is doubling down on its tyrannical tactics. We must hold Ortega accountable with the NICA Act and tell him we will not ignore his terrible tactics.

#### REBUILD AMERICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, how does America, the strongest economy in the history of the world, accept a world ranking of 23rd behind Spain and Chile in the quality of our roads and bridges—American infrastructure? Let's look at the facts.

In 2005, Congress passed a roads bill that was 35 percent smaller than what was needed just to bring our roads and bridges to a state of good repair. In 2009, Congress passed an economic stimulus bill, directed just 7 percent to our transportation and infrastructure, and, last year, we passed a transportation bill that provided less than half of what was needed to reverse the decline of our roads and bridges. This is not only weak, it is pathetically weak.

Standard & Poor's reports that for every \$1.3 billion invested in roads and bridges, it creates 29,000 jobs—American jobs—produces \$2 billion in economic growth, and reduces the Federal deficit by \$200 million.

Both Presidential candidates talked about a large investment in American infrastructure, but I am concerned that the President-elect's program may be comprised of tax cuts for already-planned projects. This would be selling the American people and the American economy short. You just spent \$105 billion rebuilding the roads and bridges of Afghanistan. You just spent \$76 billion rebuilding the roads and bridges of Iraq. It is time the Nation built here at home and in America.

#### CONGRATULATING COACH JAMES FRANKLIN

(Mr. PERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Coach James Franklin and his football team from my alma mater, Penn State, on winning the Big Ten Championship on Saturday over the Wisconsin Badgers.

Many counted out the Nittany Lions in the second quarter after Wisconsin took a commanding 28-7 lead. As expected, Penn State turned things around quickly with their lethal passing attack and always formidable defense.

Quarterback Trace McSorley set a Big Ten Championship game record with 384 passing yards and 4 touchdowns, as number 7 Penn State